Controlled Playback at Set Top Box

The STB stores the digital files it needs for playback. These files are in a compressed format (e.g., MPEG, MJPEG). The STB will also receive playlists, which are files (e.g. Text) that contains information such as filename, identifier, or pointer, date and time to play, and if the playback is time or trigger based. The STB will process the playlist and use either time or a trigger to determine when a file is to be played. The STB will process triggers that may be a tone, if analog, or a digital pattern or signal.

The STB may be analog in which case the file is decoded to analog video. If the STB is digital, it can produce an digital stream with the file spliced into the data stream.

The problem that this invention solves is that broadcasters are not able to narrow cast down to a STB level today. With this control software, the STB will receive digital files (video/audio, commands, playlists). The STB will execute the playlist automatically so that each STB can insert commercials into the broadcast program stream at a specified time or at a trigger. This will enable each STB to insert commercials that are personalized to the customer and STB.

2. How does the invention solve the problem or achieve an advantage (a description of "the invention", including figures inline as appropriate)?
This invention directly solves the problem by providing the ability for the STB to provide local ad insertion and playback.

3. If the same advantage or problem has been identified by others (inside/outside IBM), how have those others solved it and does your solution differ and why is it better?

Local ad insertion today is done at the cable headend or television station only.

4. If the invention is implemented in a product or prototype, include technical details, purpose, disclosure details to others and the date of that implementation.
It is not implemented today.

Controlled Playback at Set Top Box

Disclosure BOC8-1999-0027

Created By: Peter Lee   Created On:
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Summary

Status	Under Evaluation
Processing Location	BOC
Functional Area	Telecommunications & Media
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IDT Team	Edie Stern/Fort Lauderdale/IBM
Submitted Date	
Owning Division	GI
PVT Score	10

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IDT Selection

IDT Team:	Attorney/Patent Professional:
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Response Due to IP&L :	

Main Idea
*Title of disclosure (in English)
Controlled Playback at Set Top Box

*Idea of disclosure

1. Describe your invention, stating the problem solved (if appropriate), and indicating the advantages of using the invention.
This patent is to provide managed playback operations at a set top box (STB). The STB can be digital or analog for playback but must include a hard disk drive. The process is that digital files are stored locally on the STB. The STB will receive a playlist that defines what file is to be played or decoded at a specified time or at a specified trigger point.

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